M1776 [redacted]

Friday. February 13, 1970

Westtown

Group IV

Part I

Mr. Nyland: (Music, talk) So, we have a little different arrangement, so I can now choose if I want to start talking first and then play, I can do it without any commotion. So, a week ago today I was in San Francisco and we also had Music evening. That is now, I think, standard practice that Friday is devoted to music, whenever there is a chance. I understand you had some music here last week. I hope you can keep it up. I think it's very necessary that you learn that kind of a language. It is one way by which gradually, it is a rather slow way, gradually your emotions, your emotional center, can start to function separately from your body. And you know that is, of course, the aim; to have the centers free from each other. Then they can unite in that freedom in accordance with what is required by circumstances.

I'm very glad to be back here. It looks to me as if I've been here already so long I've forgotten about the trip. It's probably because certain things have happened or that there were different influences during this past week which made me realize more and more in depth than in time what we are really trying to do, and how difficult the problem is. Sometimes it's a very good, very good thing not to know what is ahead. If one could visualize that in all its fullness, I'm quite certain that half of the attempts that are made, even in ordinary life, would not be attempted. I think about that every once in a while. One takes on a responsibility, and before you know it you have to take on a little more, because one thing leads to another. Before you know, then, you're in the midst of something. You cannot really go back, it wouldn't be fair, and to continue, you know a little what has happened, so you start to realize what is involved, and then maybe you lose confidence. It's then not only a question of having patience, it is that one loses hope. Will it ever be

possible to make anything grow out of this conglomeration of different people? Will it ever be possible to have something that will stay or that can continue to live for a certain length of time? Will it always be necessary that there is a person who reminds you? Will there be a chance, that gradually, certain people can take that place? Sometimes I say I do not really know, although we are in the midst of something, the only way is to continue and then to see how to do the best we can within the shortest possible time and most efficiently and concentratedly and not to spare oneself, because that is one lesson that one must really learn, that whenever one is engaged in anything that is worthwhile, you have to be willing to make sacrifices for that, because if you don't want to do that it is not really worthwhile. So when once that has been decided for oneself, then you are committed and you have started. How will we learn? I will talk, I hope, still many times about that, not losing patience, and not feeling that it is too monotonous to repeat the same kind of truths, to put them in different ways and words every once in a while, to think about them in a certain way and the next day to think about them in a different way, all the time trying to remember the principles that are involved, and because of that, the difficulty becomes twofold: if I lose the principles, it will be very easy to make an organization, and of course if there is an organization the chances are ninety-nine per cent that the principles will be lost. Whichever is the Golden Mean, to reach something that is still worthwhile, more and more looking like an organization without actually being that, and at the same time in keeping on adhering to that what is the truth for that organization, and the reason why it originally was started. If one looks at all the different attempts that have been made and still are being made in different countries, organizations with a well-meaning purpose, religious denominations with a very definite aim, groups that get together to talk about the depth in philosophy, seminars in which different people gather together and listen for a little while to some kind of a famous "savant" coming

in front of them and telling them his story of his experience in his life and his ambitions, to be followed by someone else who does exactly the same thing, and the good people who come, and perhaps spend their time and money and energy, they get home filled, and really, I don't believe they get much out of it, because the following year or six months later they have to do the same thing again. But that apparently is the way it happens to be, so that whatever happens with Gurdjieff and the ideas, I hope there will never be an organized attempt. I think it is the death of the life principles, I think it has to be maintained by word of mouth; it has to be maintained by examples of people who get together and then by the mere fact of meeting are reminded of Work, and not about correspondence of letters that should have been written, or certain things that did not go right because "so-and-so", and "so-and-so", et cetera, et cetera. It keeps us away from Work. It may make a certain smoothness, and sometimes it is quite nice and right, and I think to some extent certain things of course are justified because whatever is needed is to base that what one does on mutual respect, on a wish really to share and to care for each other. But the quintessence of that kind of a grouping is always when one sees each other, one says 'Gruss Gott,' which as you mean--as you know, means "Greetings to the Lord," like was the custom and many times is still in a little bit of a hinterland somewhere, mostly in Europe where the people have had that kind of a custom for a long time, to say it when strangers happen to pass by on a lonely road, and without knowing who they are, they recognize the fact that such people have an existence, and that perhaps they can thank God for being alive. One must remember that when you Work together, that it is really for the sake of being reminded. You must never be too much filled with your commercial enterprises. There is a time for it, and then in that time, you concentrate. There is a time for certain work to be done, and that other times you must not be bothered. You must be able to let things go. Sometimes you must be able to sit in an unfinished room. Sometimes when you are cold, you must be able to keep on sitting for a little while longer and then get up and get, and get a piece of wood and put it in the woodstove. You have to learn to control yourself so that commercial life is not carried over, organization is not

carried over, that your outer world life is not carried over, but that there are times in which you contemplate about the position of your inner life, and that you want to find out if that inner life, at that time, receives enough attention from you. I'm always so sorry when one loses oneself. I'm so sorry when you lose yourself in negligence, and still it has to be mentioned because if I don't, I doubt very much if someone else will remind you. There are a few things against that, of course; one is a little afraid of saying things because if you do say it, usually someone else will object and they will ask, "Who are you?", and again, "what right is there to ask that", when you must have in mind, Work. And that when a person who makes attempts and who tries to do this or that or even at times can remind you, that you then simply say "yes" instead of "no". When it is necessary that you talk about things, but of course you don't get into each other's hair too much, but also, don't consider it a mutual admiration society. We know without any question that we are not perfect. We know that we make many mistakes, and there is no objection to tell that someone, in your opinion, made a mistake, the same way as you can say that he did all right. We have to learn a tremendous amount. I've said that this year will have to show and every day I get up with that thought. What will today bring? I had it of course on the West coast, when there were Seattle and San Francisco, and I had to consider: what is their growth, their life, what can I do to help, to contribute, to spend the time there as intelligent, intelligently as I could, without really sparing myself? But what is there to spare, because I do not care. It is not a question for me that is so difficult. When life is mixed with Work, and Work becomes a part of one's living, all one has to do is to live and there is Work. So it is not sparing in any way whatsoever, it is just continuing to live, and, you can say, intelligently enough. But I look at this group, I look at New York, I look at the development here, I have to remind you again of a few things, and not in the nature of criticism, because I understand that when one tries to do certain things, that after a little while, the law of gravity will affect it. It cannot be helped. What can be helped is that you don't see it in time. You see, the alertness

which you should have in ordinary life when you're unconscious can go over into an Awareness, but when the Awareness stops, you don't have to become dead towards that what you are doing, in monotony, even. When we have certain things that ought to be attended to, one must attend to them. We talk about that many times. I ~~would~~ will spend more time with our Chardavoyne Barn activities to see what ought to be done or can be done. I want to talk more with the different people in the Monday group or the other little groups, so that it is not just a matter where perhaps it is like this last Wednesday, I speak a little pontifically, as if from a throne, to tell, because I don't want that. I am an ordinary human being. I wish to work with all of you. The time that I can spend, I wish to spend with you as much as I can. When it is impossible, you realize it is impossible. It's not my unwillingness. It is just a matter of time, and I try gradually to delegate things, so that then they can be carried out by other people, that I don't have to carry too much of the burden myself. And then when I do this, again there are two things: the people who will, are willing to take such responsibility, when they are sufficiently in close contact with me, can then gradually learn to speak 'my language.' I call it 'my language' because there is an imprint on the different activities we are now engaged in. After a little while, I wish it would become the Group language, but perhaps it will be a little while; and the other side is simply that those who are not taking such responsibility will have, towards those who do, a certain attitude of an admission that they then are carrying out something which you don't. And that one then must take care not to be critical, because you don't know what has been told to them. You don't know my relationship towards five people of the group on Mondays, you don't have, you have no idea, and when they speak, you don't know if perhaps they speak because I've asked them to speak in that way. You don't know about the different people who are managers of the different activities. They sometimes carry out what we have discussed before to the best of their knowlege, and it behooves everyone who is not interested in that now to understand that,

that that is the case, even if they don't understand what is taking place. When I ask people to do work for me, it is because I cannot do it, and I expect then that such people, in general, are treated as if they talk to me, and that they in their turn know they are not me, because otherwise I would ask. The knife has two sides; it is difficult for those who are not responsible to understand it; it's very difficult for those who take a responsibility. Transcriptions. I would ask not to do any transcriptions unless you really wish. It's quite a difficult thing to listen to a tape. In a tape, when I talk, there is emphasis on certain words, there is also certain points at which I stop, for breath or for the beginning of a little different concept. Sometimes the emphasis, if one would write it down, would mean that the word used may have to be capitalized. It's also possible that commas and stops and semi-colons have to be inserted, which one doesn't speak about when one talks, One has to understand the gist of what, in the case of myself then, that what I try to tell. And time has to be used for that purpose. And maybe you have to go over a tape several times before you catch it. Moreover, I know, sometimes, I have an abominable style. I sometimes slough over words; sometimes with a great desire to say the things in the right way, I say it just a little bit in the wrong way, by mistake, but then I cannot change it, although I can afterwards explain it. It's on the tape. Editing is extremely difficult, and it may have to be done by several people, and perhaps first rough copies made, and then corrected by someone else, and then again checked back again with the tape. But when I've asked certain people to do certain things and they do it then with my assistance, then those who have to do re-typing — I expect them to do exactly that, and to remain attentive so that whatever corrections have been made were made with very definite intention to correcting it, and that is why I ask. If you want to work, it's only acceptable when you can work with desire, with enthusiasm, with attention, with that what engages you for the sake of that kind of work, otherwise it takes much too much energy and time on the part of others to correct you. I'd much rather have no tape transcribed at all, unless that can be done. There has been too much carelessness, partly because of misunderstandings, partly because it is a difficult kind of a subject, partly also because when such transcriptions are used for index, how to index and what to use as references, cross

references, words, subjects and so forth. But of course! That's in the nature of it; that's exactly the intriguing part. That is exactly where it is necessary to become a little bit more attentive for the sake of Work. It is all the time for the sake of Work. It's not for the sake of glorification of anybody. And also, it is a work of love, and when love is gone, I'd much rather have nothing to do with it. From time to time we will talk about that- I wanted to say it now. There are several other little things connected with it, and perhaps I will have some memo about what we should do. There is a little thing, for instance; we start work at the Barn at eight-thirty in the morning 'til five or six o'-clock. I've said something about lunches. I hope you have understood it at the time; I hope you still remember it. I would like the lunch at the Barn to be for people who work in the neighborhood; we go as far as Amity, but at the time we left Westtown out, and also I think Warwick is a little too far. I don't believe that we should have two kind of lunches, one in Amity and one at the Barn. I think it is right to have some breakfast in Amity, and if Joanne would like to have dinner in the evening it would be helpful but not lunch. Lunch is at the Barn for people who come who have worked, who perhaps then could wish to talk a little, and where the level of that kind of a conversation has to be maintained correctly. But when we start at eight-thirty, I don't want anyone to be there before eight-thirty, and I hope this is now clear, so clear that no one has any doubt. I've explained it, I've even gone into a little bit of poetical language when I talked about the Barn, and what the meaning is of that structure, and how it has a life of its own, and how I wish to try to maintain it. And when you get there, you start Work. There is no gossip at the Barn than just a little; if you can, eliminate as much as you can, please do it. It is natural to talk, and of course, we are not such dumbells, but restrain yourself. I've said before I don't really want people to make the Barn a nice little place where I can call for you at the Barn at a little bit of a meeting, like in front of the Post Office. It is not so easy with transportation, I know, but try ~~tp lee% ot om ,omd/ O wpi;d ;ole tp~~ establish a bus service to keep it in mind; I would like to

from Amity to the Barn, leaving Amity at quarter to nine. I would like to arrange with the Garage to do that regularly, every morning without fail, that someone at the present time employed and engaged in Garage work will take care of it. If there are any expenses connected with that, the fund will pay it. I don't want people to sit and wait and wait and when they ask, that they hear, "I have no time," and they let them sit for another fifteen or twenty minutes. It is not right, the office needs people at a certain time to be there, and when they have no transportation, you'll have to take care of it. I know all the excuses. I know also that we have Winter, and that it is sometimes cold, and that sometimes a car has broken down, and that sometimes it is a little impossible, but if I make it in make it clear in this way, that I consider it an opportunity and that I would like someone to become responsible for that, so that also that kind of thing, I can dismiss from my mind. There are many little things of that kind which I feel have to be straightened out, and when they have been straightened out or delegated to someone, then I can wash my hands of them. You know it is not right. I'm not a detail man, but I will do it when it is necessary, and then it will be done to the last penny. Again I say it is not in criticism, it's only to remind you of the value of your own life. If you want to grow up as a responsible person, learn to take responsibilities. Make sure that at least you think you can comply with it, don't bite off too big a piece, but learn to grow up, and don't commit each time the same kind of mistake. It is time we learn. It is time we concentrate on what we have to do. Again I say I'm not talking about those who understand, only to those who are perhaps, as the saying goes, "the shoe fits." Then take it to heart and see if you belong in this kind of "organization", this kind of a group, where it is necessary to divide work among us in order to have a totality of work accomplished, I hope, in a short enough time to be useful, to become useful and to stand on its own feet. I will not live on this Earth forever, and you may as well know, the time is short, and that what could be done today, I wished it were done yesterday.

Well talk a little more later, I'll play now. I'll be glad to play on this piano, I like it. I played on the organ in Seattle,

organ in Trinity in San Francisco. I played the piano in Seattle, also again at San Francisco! I like this piano. It's an old trusty, trusty.

To our cooperation together. If you wish, you can drink.

Part II

It's difficult to give you tasks. It is already difficult to know...to know how much you hear- And of course even more difficult to know how much you take in, what you want to take in, what you can take in, what you really think you should, what you believe is of need for you. Again the question of "How empty are you?" because you, during ordinary life, forget your emptiness, and it's sometimes very strange to ask, even yourself, to ask the question if you are empty. Everything in ordinary life is really made to fill you, it doesn't matter if it's nonsense or sport, it occupies you. It has to keep you busy; it is something in which you are engaged. You have to keep on eating and drinking and living, You have to have your interests, You have to consider that you are a product of this world. And when you really are alert to your life, and you really feel that you are doing your best, and that the things are not so bad, or that if they are a little bad, you make an adjustment to them. Is there really, and quite honestly, for oneself, a reason to think that one ought to Work? When one has great difficulties in Working and when there is in the relationships among us when we are Working, so-called, or that there is something that keeps us together, is it really enough to give you an assurance that you're on the road of building a Soul, the concept of that what you ought to become, an image what you hope for, call it as it may be by subjective wishes, but still alive enough to be alert to the possibility of that existing. And then you wish to go there, and what part will your inner Life get? And when you look at your Conscience, do you really think it is necessary that you should try to wake up? When I talk every once in a while, perhaps every so often, every time maybe a little too often, that I use the word "God," and then there may be people who are prejudiced or, I wouldn't even call them agnostic, because if they were really agnostic they wouldn't be agnostic, they would have belief in something, and therefore perhaps it would take on the name of something that is higher than they are, if one could acknowlege that. But take an ordinary, average person or a person who's reading sufficient num-

ber of books and knows a little bit about what has gone on in the world in history, and certain books that have existed for some time, then disappeared. They were classics. Every once in a while we get reprints, and then we look at it, and glance in it, and the word strikes you, (?) then you say, "It's nice to read it, I'm glad I have the book," and you close it; it's on your shelf again. ALL AND EVERTTHING with the long sentences, a picture of Gurdjieff standing with a hat in his hand, almost waving to those who are in front of him, the reporters, on the boat when he came for the first time in 1924, and the expression on his face. Did he care? Did he know what he was then? Did he have within himself an air dedain of knowing that what he was in the respect to those who looked at him, and looking inside, seeing all his years of the REMARKABLE MEN period unfold for him, saying, "All of that I went through, for what, just now to be photographed and to be published in the magazine?" Every once in a while in thinking about such a life, and how Gurdjieff must have felt about us, who were around him, and most likely, how lonesome he was. Alone--that was the road he choose, he chose. Do we want it? Do we really want Work? Because you know it's going to cost your life if you really become interested. It will mean that many of the things that you are now interested in, you will automatically forget and your interest will not be there, your time will be spent on impossibilities, far from easy, and it's not that I want to paint a black picture, and it surely is not a white picture, it will have all kind of gradations of grey, and that is your future, for the sake of being able to live after you die, and do you care? Do you really think that you will continue to live, or that there is an opportunity for that? Do you think about it? Does it ever become that kind of a motivation? When you see you're engaged with each other and you see how difficult it is even to keep your tongue, to keep your mouth shut, not to express yourself, not to fall into traps, which of course are there all the time, and to behave just like an ordinary human being, day after day, time after time, only once in a while in the beginning and sometimes later even less to be reminded of Work and then to be honest, (?) ~~and say~~ I say, "I wish to Work, I want to find out, I want to dedicate that what I am now to something of a higher kind, because what I am now, I'm finished with or I know it," and it is not the truth, you're not finished with it. You have a tremendous amount of life still to go through, unconsciously. You still have an awful lot of work ahead of you, in an ordinary

Sp! should these be in quotes

sense. You still have to make yourself, perfect yourself, become mature, go through life and pay. And then one talks already about the possibility of dying when you don't want to die at all, and you don't want to think about what might happen. How much is your inner life disturbing you? Really to what extent, to be honest, to be really honest, to what extent does it bother you, or does it help you not to fall asleep or what you wish to do for it and give, give up, if that were demanded? And perhaps you sometimes don't know what I'm talking about, and all the different things that in the last years or so I've talked about. When I asked Seattle and San Francisco to take care of the tapes from here and really to attend to them to see if they could extract certain things from it, I was amazed that I had to say, 'You will receive five tapes a week at least.' Then I said to myself, 'My God, five tapes. Each tape, expressed in the terminology of recorders, eighteen hundred feet of words, subjects, elucidated, reminders of something that has to do with inner life and Work, without doubt, because that is the aim of having meetings and talking. And of course, repetitious, but if possible, new.' And then I said, "But that's exactly what I do during the day. I live every day the same kind of a day. That has nothing to do with five tapes a week, because seven days a week I also repeat every day the same things, unconsciously. That is my life. Is that life then so much worse or better, or is having even seven meetings or five meetings or six a week, is that so strange? Shouldn't it be really the kind of thing that one says 'So many hours are necessary for the devotion to the Lord.'" And when I say Lord I mean inner life, real life, life that exists and continues to exist, because what is life worth if it couldn't exist forever. And is it strange then to say that an hour and a half we devote to really thinking and feeling in the right kind of a way about the aim of one's existence, because we don't do that in ordinary life. We really don't care much about that. We sometimes live even day by day to make sure we can sleep in peace and pay bills and whatever else we want to do. So against all of that kind of a humdrum existence which, without any question, already starts to affect you, the horror of having to lose a job and finding a new one, of looking around

for a dollar when you have to pay something that you cannot afford, but has to be done because your car needs repair, that you try to make a living, ekeing it out, putting two and two together, having ambitions which you cannot fulfill- as a matter of fact, having a hard time? Your life without wish, a life without ideal, because now I ask the other question, "How much is there in your life when you don't consider Work?" What is the meaning then? I came across a little phrase: "Is every approach of daylight a delight for you?" And I think, when I consider this when I wake up and I can thank God the day ahead of me, being grateful, Am I grateful for what, really? For all the troubles of the world? For the way I have to live, what I have to do, must do? When there is strength, it's alright, but that strength also could be used for something else. And then when I have vacation, and I have leisure, when I can do what I like, what do I do then? I'm talking about aims, about the value of Life for a man on Earth; what is there for a man on Earth, like we are, to live for? And also, if one has to be honest about Work in the objective sense, I have to be honest about Work in the subjective sense. And these are the thoughts, I feel, one has to consider time and time again and day after day because they come back, and even if they do bother you, do they bring you to something that you actually would consider Work, Work on yourself? And then the next question: When you say "yes", do you know how to Work? Do you spend, really, time in trying to define for you, what is Work, for you? So that you could carry on a conversation in that kind of a language and be understood, that there is no further mistake about concepts. What have you done towards that? If you want to call it that way, it would be like schoolwork, and it should be, really, learning a lesson, a learning of A-B-C, so that you know how to use the words intelligently, not even necessarily thinking that you have to teach it, but for yourself. There is Beelzebub's Book. The things that are given that are there when you wish to grow that you could grow and no interest in your growth, your (?) real growth, satisfied with the sop (?) of Mother Nature, simply given to you to keep you quiet. We are very strange lot of people. Every once in a while up

or then down, getting a little older and not wanting to sometimes, seeing this and that happen in front of your nose and becoming less and less interested, having interests of your own which become narrower and narrower, limiting your friends to those who continue to agree with you, books that stay on the shelf, every once in a little bit of a book that is new, and also that. Interest in Life, aliveness I call it. How much aliveness is in you? So that when you see each other you can say "Good morning!" and you mean it; "Good morning!" You say "I'm glad to see you!" When you say "goodnight", "Have a good sleep; I hope you will rest." "Goodbye," I've said it before, God be with you - that you could mean. Little bits of certain sayings to remind each other, as I said in the beginning this, "Greet the Lord"- what is it among us as a group? When you meet and see each other, and when you talk, and what do you talk about? Really what do you talk about? For several years now we talk about Work, and where is it in your ordinary conversations? Or is it still filled and keeps on being filled with all kind of nonsense, which you know is nonsense, just to fill the time; a little bit of blue sky, and saying it is raining and perhaps it's going to be too cold tonight? Where are you living? I ask you because there is a Barn and you come here; and why, why in God's name do you come? If you saw that there is a calamity, and you know you have to take shelter or that something dire is going to happen to you - I've used the word "Cassandra" many times - the fall of Troy. Is it going to be just exactly the same way a year from now, ten years from now because you wish it to be the same? What is happening? Why don't you wake up? Why don't you see yourself in the way you behave? Why are you careless, stupid, and inconsiderate for each other? Why don't you care? Then only in a very superficial way, something that you then can get from the other. That's how you give, so that you can get some return. You remember Gurdjieff. He was a wise man. He has written a book called ALL AND EVERYTHING. I hope someday you will remember it.

Goodnight. To Gurdjieff.

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